REMARKS

This communication is responsive to the Office Action dated December 8, 2004.

Applicant has not amended claims. In the Office Action, the Examiner incorrectly referred to

claims 1-60. Applicant respectfully points out that in an Amendment dated May 17, 2004,

Applicant cancelled claim 6. Consequently, claims 1-5 and 7-60 are currently pending. For

purposes of this response, Applicant will address pending claims 1-5 and 7-60.

Claim Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-5 and 7-60 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

as being unpatentable over Bain et al (US 5,315,508) in view of Kara et al. (US 5,778,076).

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. The applied references fail to disclose or suggest

the inventions defined by Applicant's claims, and provide no teaching that would have suggested

the desirability of modification to arrive at the claimed invention.

Claims 1-5

Before addressing the particular rejections of claims 1-5, a review of Applicant's

invention appears to be in order. As described in the present application, in one embodiment

Applicant's label management system may include a revision control module for controlling the

design of labels. As one example, on pg. 7, ll. 4-12, the present application states:

> *Label management system 12, for example, includes revision control modules for
> controlling labeling data through all stages of the process including developing the label,
> approving the label for use by manufacturing facilities 6 and print center 14, and
> archiving and time stamping the label for subsequent verification. Label management
> system 12 supports, for example, check-in and check-out procedures for controlling
> access to label templates, graphics, and label data generally. Furthermore, these
> features of label management system 12 may be useful in tracking changes to labels and
> providing revision histories and other modification information.*

Claim 1 of the present application recites a system comprising a database storing label

records and associated label data for a plurality of different products manufactured by an

organization. Claim 1 further recites a label record manager that controls the creation and

modification of the label records by multiple users within the organization, wherein the label

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record manager includes a revision control module to track changes made to the label records and the associated label data.

The cited references fail to teach or suggest numerous elements of Applicants' claim 1. For example, the applied references lack any teaching that would have suggested a system comprising a label record manager that includes a revision control module to track changes made to the label records and the associated label data.

In rejecting claim 1, the Examiner cited col. 1, ln. 40 – col 3, ln. 38 of Bain et al (herein, "Bain"). However, the cited portions of Bain are silent with respect to numerous elements of Applicant's claim 1. For example, the cited portion of Bain does not even mention, let alone teach or suggest, a revision control module for tracking design changes to label records. Moreover, per the Examiner's request, the Applicant has considered Bain in its entirety, and determined that Bain is entirely silent with respect to a revision control module for tracking changes to label records, as required by claim 1.

In contrast, Bain describes a purchase order processing system that automatically generates shipping labels based on requirements for different consignees. In particular, the Bain system includes a computer that presents a number of consignee-specific display screen files that are associated with a number of different consignees, each of whom require a different set of input data from a user to process a purchase order that is issued by the consignee.[1] Each display screen file is associated with a particular consignee and includes data representing information to be depicted on the display to prompt a user to enter only that data required by the associated consignee to process a purchase order issued by the consignee. The computer prints different shipping labels in compliance with the consignees' specific requirements, i.e., the different sets of input data.

Contrary to the Examiner's assertion, the ability of the Bain system to print different labels for different consignees is fundamentally different from Applicant's claimed system in which a label record manager controls the creation and modification of label records by multiple users and includes a revision control module for tracking changes made to each label record and the associated label data, as required by claim 1. The Bain system merely allows users to enter

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[1] Summary.

different data sets that are used to generate different, consignee-specific labels. The users of the Bain system are not modifying (i.e., changing the design of) individual label records. Rather, Bain makes clear that the users provide consignee-specific information via an input template, such as the Consignee's address and vendor's address, and that data is merely used to populate "data fields" when printing the labels. This in unrelated to a revision control module for tracking changes made to labels by multiple users, as required by Applicant's claim 1. Nowhere does Bain describe or suggest a control module that tracks changes to the design of the labels.

Further, Bain does not teach or suggest a revision control module that maintains modification logs for the label records and provides change histories for the label records, as required by claim 2. Again, per the Examiner's request, Applicant has considered Bain in its entirety, and the Bain system is unrelated to these elements of Applicant's claim 2. Nowhere does Bain describe a revision control module that maintains modification logs for the label records and provides change histories for the label records.[2] It appears that the Examiner has completely overlooked these elements. Applicant requests the Examiner particularly identify the sections relied upon in rejecting claim 2, as is required in accordance with 37. C.F.R 1.04(c)(2).

Similarly, Bain fails to teach or describe a revision control module that archives images for the labels with corresponding date and time stamps. Bain describes storing consignee-specific data sets for use in printing different labels. This is different from archiving actual images for labels. In fact, Bain does not describe generation of images at all, let alone a system that archives the images with corresponding date and time stamps, as required by Applicant's claim 3. Again, it appears that the Examiner has completely overlooked these elements. Applicant requests the Examiner particularly identify the sections relied upon in rejecting claim 3.

With respect to claim 4, the Examiner implicitly acknowledges that Bain fails to teach or suggest a label record manager that presents an interface by which a user can check-in and check-out a label record for revision, as recited by claim 4. Nevertheless, the Examiner rejects Applicant's claim 4 in view of Kara.

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[2] Bain does refer to an "audit trail," but this feature tracks "what has been packed for a particular purchase order." In other words, the audit trail in Bain refers to the items packed (e.g. in a box) with respect to a purchase order. This is

However, Kara does nothing to address these basic deficiencies of Bain. In fact, Kara describes a system for electronically dispensing postage and is entirely unrelated to Applicant's claimed invention. More specifically, Kara describes a portable system capable of dispensing postage to a piece of mail based on a stored amount of preauthorized postage. Kara fails to teach or suggest any of the elements of Applicant's claims. As but one of many examples, contrary to the Examiner's assertion, Kara fails to describe a revision control module of the label record manager presents an interface by which a user can "check-in and check-out" a label record for revision, as required by claim 4. In fact, Kara describes no mechanism for modifying labels at all, let alone an interface by which a user can check-in and check-out labels for revision.

Claims 7-12

For reasons similar to those set forth above, neither Bain nor Kara teach or suggest storing label records and associated label data, generating images of labels based on the label records and associated label data, and archiving the images with corresponding date and time stamps, as required by claim 7. Bain, for example, makes no mention of archiving images of labels, let alone archiving the images with date and time stamps. Kara is entirely unrelated to the elements of claims 7-11.

The Examiner is incorrect in his characterization of Bain with respect to these elements of Applicant's independent claim 7. Bain fails to even mention generation of images based on label data, let alone mechanisms for archiving the images with corresponding data and time stamps. Applicant specifically requests the Examiner particularly identify the sections relied upon in rejecting claims 7-12.

Claims 13-23

Neither Bain nor Kara teach or suggest storing label records having a publication status, presenting an interface for setting the publication status of the label record, and printing a label at one of a plurality of output locations based on the label record and the publication status, as required by claim 13. In fact, neither Bain nor Kara make any mention of a publication status

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unrelated a revision control module that tracks modification logs and change histories for changes made to the design of an individual label, as claimed by the Applicant.

associated with a label record. Moreover, the Examiner failed to even comment on these elements of Applicant's independent claim 13. Applicant specifically requests the Examiner particularly identify the sections relied upon in rejecting claims 13-23.

Claims 24-30, 41-44, 57-60

Claim 24 recites a label management software system comprising a database storing configuration data defining an organization having a number of business units and manufacturing facilities, wherein the label management system creates a label record associated with one of the business units, and selectively prints a label at one of the manufacturing facilities based on the label record and the associated business units. Claim 27 recites associating label records with business units, and printing a label at one of the manufacturing facilities according to the selected label record and the associated business unit.

Neither Bain nor Kara teach or suggest a label management software system that selectively prints a label at different manufacturing facilities according to a business unit associated with a label record. In fact, in direct contrast with these claim elements, Kara specifically describes a system in which a "personal computer 12" is physically coupled to a "marking printer 40."[3] Kara clearly states that the computer's processor 13 receives data and outputs the data to marking printer 40 to print a shipping label or packing label.[4] Thus, Kara does not describe a system capable of printing a label at different manufacturing facilities, let alone a system that selectively prints the label at different manufacturing facilities based on a business unit associated with a label record, as required by claim 24.

Similarly, Kara specifically states: "The user will enter the desired amount of postage; the program will retrieve this postage stored within the portable processor, and the E-STAMP program will print postage indicia through a coupled printing device onto the outgoing mail or label." Thus, contrary to the Examiner's assertion, Kara teaches printing indicia on a printing device directly coupled to electronic postage dispensing device. Clearly, neither Bain nor Kara teach or suggest a label management software system that selectively prints a label at different manufacturing facilities according to a business unit associated with a label record.

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[3] See, e.g., FIG. 1.
[4] Col. 8, ll. 12-18.

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Claims 31– 40

Claim 31 recites a system comprising a database storing label records and associated archived images of labels. The system further comprises an output module to print a label from a selected one of the label records, wherein the output module includes an interface for presenting the archived label image associated with the selected label record.

Bain and Kara fail are entirely silent with respect to archiving images of labels, and an interface for presenting the archived images of labels, as required by claim 31. As described above, Bain and Kara fail entire to describe management of label images at all, let alone an output module that includes an interface for presenting archived label images associated with a label record.

Similarly, none of the cited references teach or suggest displaying the archived label image associated with the selected label record for verification by a user; and printing a label upon receiving input indicative of the verification, as required by claim 34. Again, it appears that the Examiner has completely overlooked these elements. Applicant requests the Examiner particularly identify the sections relied upon in rejecting these claims, as is required.

Claims 45-47

Claim 45 recites a label management system comprising a template design tool to create the label templates, wherein the template defines one or more fields; a graphics design tool to create graphics; a template manager software module to parse the templates and store the templates and field information within the database; a graphics manager to receive the graphics from the graphics design tool and store corresponding graphical data within the database; a label record manager software module presenting an interface to create label records for associating the graphics and text within the fields of the label template; and an output manager software module for printing a label based on a selected one of the label records and the associated graphics and text.

Unlike the requirements of claim 45, none of the cited references describe a system for creating labels based on both graphics and text. As described above, Bain describes a system that automatically prints labels using stored consignee-specific textual data, e.g., a consignee's

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address or a vendor's address. Kara describes a portable system capable of dispensing postage to a piece of mail. Although Kara mentions printing personalized graphics as part of the stamp, there is no teaching or suggestion of a label management system that combines a graphics manager to create graphics, a template manager to create label templates, a label record manager to create label records by associating the graphics and text with the label template and an output manager, as required by claim 45.

Claims 48-56

Claim 48 describes a label management system for managing label records for multiple organizations. As recited in claim 48, the label management system comprises a database storing configuration data defining the plurality of organizations, each organization having at least one group and at least one output location. Claim 48 further recites a plurality of software modules executing on computing devices coupled to the database, wherein the software modules present an interface by which each authorized users of the groups create label records and selectively print the labels at the corresponding output location for the organizations.

Claim 51 describes a method for providing a label management service and recites storing configuration data defining a plurality of organizations, each organization having at least one group and at least one output location, presenting an interface for by which each authorized users of the groups create label records, and in response to input from the users, selectively printing labels at the corresponding output locations for the organizations.

As described above, in direct contrast with these claim elements, Kara specifically describes a system in which a "personal computer 12" is physically coupled to a "marking printer 40."[5] Kara clearly states that the computer's processor 13 receives data and outputs the data to marking printer 40 to print a shipping label or packing label.[6] Similarly, Kara specifically states: "The user will enter the desired amount of postage; the program will retrieve this postage stored within the portable processor, and the E-STAMP program will print postage indicia through a coupled printing device onto the outgoing mail or label." Thus, contrary to the Examiner's assertion, Kara teaches printing indicia on a printing device directly coupled to electronic postage

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[5] See, e.g., FIG. 1.
[6] Col. 8, ll. 12-18.

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dispensing device. Clearly, neither Bain nor Kara teach or suggest a system capable of selectively printing a label at different output locations for different organizations, as required by claim 48.

For at least these reasons, the Examiner has failed to establish a prima facie case for non-patentability of Applicant's claims 1-5 and 7-60 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a). Withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

CONCLUSION

All claims in this application are in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and prompt allowance of all pending claims. Please charge any additional fees or credit any overpayment to deposit account number 50-1778. The Examiner is invited to telephone the below-signed attorney to discuss this application.

Date:
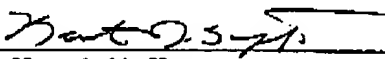February 11, 2005
SHUMAKER & SIEFFERT, P.A.
8425 Seasons Parkway, Suite 105
St. Paul, Minnesota 55125
Telephone: 651.735.1100
Facsimile: 651.735.1102

By:

Name: Kent J. Sieffert
Reg. No.: 41,312

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